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ABSTRACT

The college admissions process and the college selection process are complex and much debated procedures which confront more than 50% of high school seniors in the United States. The purpose of this digest is to help students explore options available in choosing a suitable postsecondary education. For example the advantages of large or small schools, and considerations for public, private, or church-related schools are examined; the importance of testing and test preparation is discussed; and the opportunities for financial aid are explored. The importance high school counselors in the entire process is emphasized. Chapters are: (1) Foreword to Students; (2) Getting the Most From Your High School Counselor; (3) The SAT: What, How, Who Cares? (4) How to Find Financial Aid; (5) Tough Questions to Ask Any Admissions Officer; (6) Selecting a College: One Size Does Not Fit All; (7) Campus Lifestyle: An Important Consideration in Choosing a College; (8) Major Decisions: Choosing the Right College Major; (9) How to Survive Freshman Year; and (10) Learning a New Role...For Parents. (JBJ)

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ED 399 491

Valuable information from prominent educators for all college-bound students

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College-Bound Digest®

Who's Who Among American High School Students®

CG027341

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College-Bound Digest

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721 N. McKinley Road
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About the Publisher

Since 1967, *Who's Who Among American High School Students*® has provided award recognition for high school students who have demonstrated excellence in academics, athletics or extracurricular activities. More than 15,000 high schools and most of our nation's major youth organizations use the publication to recognize their student leaders.

To assure public awareness of the achievements of listed students, *Who's Who* is distributed free to all high schools who participate in the program and all colleges and libraries interested in student leaders. Up to 15,000 complimentary copies of the book are distributed each year. Further recognition for students is also accomplished through a press relations program in which 2,000 newspapers nationwide publish articles listing their local *Who's Who* award winners.

In addition to recognizing the achievements of students, *Who's Who* sponsors:

- Scholarship Awards — Approximately $200,000 in awards each year through three separate programs
- CRS - The College Referral Service® — A reference service linking college-bound students with colleges and universities
- Grants — Financial support for educational and youth organizations which provide valuable programs and services for our nation's youth
- Teen Surveys — Opinion polls of student leaders circulated to educators, government officials and the press
- College-Bound Digest — A booklet distributed free to high school guidance offices with valuable advice and information for college-bound students

All *Who's Who* policies are reviewed by prominent educators who serve on the Committee on Ethics, Standards and Practices. The involvement of these educators in the administration of all programs guarantees students, parents and school administrators that the *Who's Who* program is compatible with the goals and high standards of existing awards programs in our nation's schools. *Who's Who* is a member of most major educational associations.

The reference and recognition values of the publication and program have been acknowledged by several hundred colleges and universities and the American Library Association.

If your school does not participate in the *Who's Who* program yet, counselors or administrators are invited to write for nomination materials and complete information to the address on this booklet.

Note to Counselors

This monograph about the college selection process is intended to serve you and your students as a resource to compliment your total guidance efforts. Please feel free to "copy" articles or reproduce them to meet your needs. Should you desire additional copies for your department, please use the order form below.

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We wish to acknowledge the special contribution of Robert G. McLendon, Vice President and Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid, Brevard College, Brevard, North Carolina who was instrumental in selecting appropriate topics and authors for this publication.

Foreword to Students

The college admissions process and the college selection process are complex and much debated procedures which confront more than 50% of our nation's graduating high school students. Selecting the right college can be frightening, confusing and overwhelming, sometimes all at the same time. It can also be exciting, informative, challenging and rewarding, generally dependent on how much effort the student expends on the process.

There are numerous fine directories which describe in as much detail as you would ever want the complete facts on each and every one of the more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States. Most high school guidance offices and local libraries have these directories for reference.

The purpose of the College-Bound Digest is to help students explore the choices and options available — the advantages of big schools, small schools, public, private, church related; the importance of testing and test preparation; the opportunities for financial aid. We have attempted to provide students with information which will help in the evaluation of the options and opportunities available to most college-bound individuals.

We must emphasize the importance of high school counselors in the entire process. When candor and commitment to the process are displayed by the students, the counselors can generally be effective and helpful in guiding the student to the right choices.

Good luck, relax and enjoy the process.

WHO'S WHO AMONG AMERICAN
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Paul C. Krouse
Publisher

Getting the Most From Your High School Counselor

By James Warfield

Your high school counselor's job is to help you. Your job is to get to know your counselor so that he/she can help you in an effective manner. Helping your counselor help you requires open and frank discussions regarding your goals and personal plans.

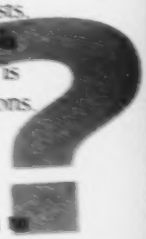
Your High School Counselor Should:

- **know your abilities**
- **know your goals**
- **recommend academic course selections**
- **recommend which college entrance test to take**
- **recommend colleges that meet your criteria**
- **help you focus your ideas and goals**
- **assist you in applying for scholarships and financial aid**
- **most importantly, make you think**

Recommendations should be based upon your academic abilities and goals. This is a critical issue because the appropriateness of this advice is determined by the consistency between your aspirations and aptitudes. Verifying the accuracy of your self-perceptions is important in order to avoid sudden surprises caused by false hopes or unrealistic expectations or under-estimating your abilities and aiming too low. Your counselor exists to help you become everything you are capable of within a realistic framework.

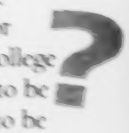
College Entrance Exams

For many students, the college selection process begins with the PSAT, taken in the fall of the junior year. Your counselor should advise you which of the college entrance tests to take, SAT I, SAT II, ACT and AP, and when to take them. The type and location of college you apply to will determine which tests to take. The quality of the college, the quality of your own academic program, and whether or not you plan to apply Early Decision, will determine when you should take such tests. Many juniors don't know to which schools they'd like to apply, so advance planning is necessary in order to maintain open options.



Questions You Need to Know

Finding the right college will require you to know yourself, your likes and dislikes. In what kind of environment do you see yourself being most comfortable? Can you picture yourself at a small college or a mid-size or large university setting? Do you want a college to be in a rural community, a suburb or to be in an urban environment? Do you want to be in a different geographic part of the country, or is being close to home important to you? What are some of your academic areas of interest? What kind of extracurricular offering do you want to participate in? As you answer these questions, the attributes of your ideal college will become more clear. Through discussion with your counselor you'll be able to assess your needs, and more clearly focus



your perceptions of yourself and of the schools you will be researching.

College Selection

Your counselor should help generate a list of colleges that meet your requirements by drawing upon his/her own wealth of knowledge or utilizing the many reference materials available.

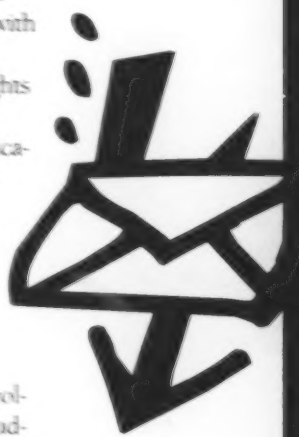
Campus visits are the most effective means to determine if the college is right for you. When to visit is a matter of individual taste or need. Keep in mind that as you visit more schools your observational skills will become more sophisticated and your reflections of each will be altered. It may be more prudent to visit only those schools to which you have been accepted, after you have received all your admissions decisions.

As you narrow your choice of colleges, your counselor should review with you the possibilities of acceptance or rejection at each. At least one of your choices should be a safety choice, one in which you are almost guaranteed of being admitted.

Applications

After the list of colleges to which you are going to apply has been determined, it is your responsibility to obtain the application and meet deadline dates. Many colleges require a counselor's recommendation or a Secondary School Reference. Some require additional recommendations from specific teachers. Establish application procedures with your counselor so that he/she, the teacher, and school have adequate time to do their part in order to meet your deadline dates. If you are required to write an essay or personal statement, discuss this with your counselor and English teacher. These discussions serve several purposes: help you generate ideas and narrow topics that you wish to write about; provide you with suggestions that will enhance your applications; and provide the counselor with insights that will compliment your application.

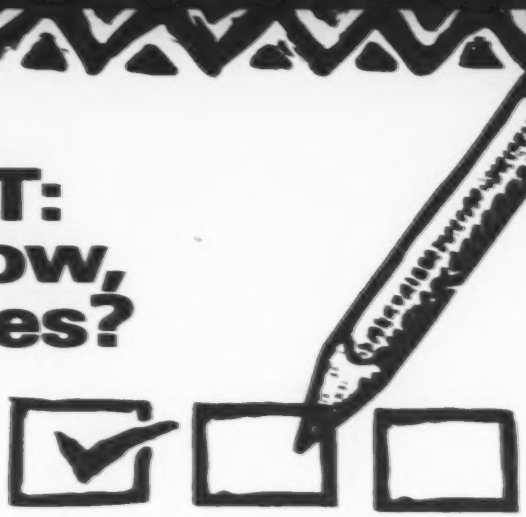
It is your responsibility to file your applications on time, see that your test scores are sent to the admissions office, and file the financial aid applications. Your counselor will help you determine which scores to send, which financial aid form is required and how to fulfill these requirements.



Finding, selecting and applying to the colleges that are right for you is a long and studied process. It involves a lot of letter-writing, telephoning, research, weighing alternatives, and just plain old thinking. It's a decision-making process that requires questioning, information gathering, evaluation of the information and more questioning. This cycle is often repeated in order to make effective decisions. The better the decision-making process the more likely your college experience will be successful.

James Warfield is Director of Pupil Personnel at Lake Forest High School, Lake Forest, Illinois.

The SAT: What, How, Who Cares?



It's time to take the SAT. Your best strategy is to learn as much as you can about the test:

SAT I: *Reasoning Test.* This first part of the SAT is composed of both a verbal and a math section.

Verbal — half of the questions assess your ability to read and think critically. Through analogies, defining vocabulary words in the context of a passage and sentence completion questions, your reasoning abilities will be assessed.

Math — math problems are presented, some of which require you to produce your own answers instead of all multiple choice questions (calculators are encouraged).

SAT II: *Subject Tests.* This second part is optional; you take one or more tests if requested by the colleges to which you are applying. These are one-hour tests in subjects such as writing, literature, history, science, foreign languages, etc.

Can you prepare for the SAT? YES!

Whether you prepare on your own, with friends or through a formal SAT review course, the key is PRACTICE!

Practice taking the test in your sophomore or junior year by taking the PSAT/NMSQT. You can take the SAT multiple times. Score reports tell you how you compared to other state and national test takers. In addition, the reports give you customized answers to questions about your particular score that will help you analyze your performance and prepare for more testing.

The Student Answer Service will provide a computer-produced report telling you how you answered the questions on the SAT by type (e.g., sentence completion, analogy) and difficulty. You can assess your strengths and weaknesses, plan and take additional course work, then retake the tests and score higher.

Your guidance counselor, public library and local bookstore are sources for practice tests and test preparation materials. You can also write to: College Board Promotional Services Office, 45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023.

If you feel the need for a structured preparation program for the SAT, investigate school-sponsored and commercial preparation programs by comparing:

- **number of sessions over a period of time (more is better)**
- **class size (10-15 students is ideal)**
- **opportunity to make up missed classes**
- **experience of previous enrollees**

How will your SAT scores be used?

How important, really, are your scores and how will college admissions committees interpret them?

Very few colleges use arbitrary cut-off scores to determine acceptance. College admissions staffs know that, for a variety of reasons, your scores may not match your high school achievement level. Your test scores are reviewed along with your:

- **class rank**
- **course selection and grades**
- **extracurricular activities**
- **recommendations**
- **relationship with alumni**
- **success of other graduates from your school at the institution**

Every selective college or university attempts to admit students who they can predict will do well. Admissions staff experience suggests that certain levels of achievement can be predicted with a fair degree of accuracy when used in conjunction with the high school record.

Colleges and universities publish their average SAT. Their average SAT is just that; there have been many applicants whose scores are under the average but who have the proven achievement to be admitted. Likewise, there may be applicants with higher than the average test scores who are rejected.

Test scores do not show the desire to learn, the ambition to succeed or the perseverance necessary for academic excellence. College admissions officers are aware of these facts and they will read your entire application with an awareness that you are more than a score on a computer printout.

Prepared from articles by: Dr. Judith T. Bainbridge, Director of Educational Services, Furman University; Lisa K. Bartl, Associate Director, New SAT Project, College Board; Stanley H. Kaplan, Chairman, Stanley H. Kaplan Educational Center Ltd.

How to Find Financial Aid

By Debra M. Kirby

Did you know that approximately 24 billion dollars in education-related financial aid are awarded each year? This aid comes in many forms, including scholarships, fellowships, grants, loans, awards, work study, and internships. These awards are given through a variety of public and private sources, from federal and state government organizations to local associations. In addition, colleges and universities offer many forms of aid for their students.

The key to increasing the likelihood of meeting your aid-related financial goals is to plan ahead. This means allowing enough time to carefully assess your particular needs and preferences, consider any special circumstances or conditions that might qualify you for aid, and thoroughly research available aid programs.

Following are some guidelines to help you maximize your chances of finding financial aid.

✎ Start Your Research Early

Allow enough time to complete all of the necessary steps and you will be more likely to identify and meet application deadlines for a wide variety of awards for which you may qualify.

Begin this process as early as possible preferably at least two years before you think you will need financial assistance. Many awards are given on a first-come, first-served basis, which means if you don't file your application early enough, the aid will already have been distributed. An early start may also allow you to identify organizations that offer scholarships to members or participants, such as scouting groups or 4-H clubs, in time to establish membership or otherwise meet their qualifying criteria.

Along with widely varying eligibility criteria, many awards carry application deadlines that come up throughout the year. Even if you miss the deadline for a particular award, you may still be eligible for the same award the following year. In fact, many awards are specifically designed for undergraduate students at the sophomore, junior, and/or senior levels.

✎ Assess Your Needs and Goals

The intended recipients for financial aid programs, and the purposes for which these awards were established, can vary greatly. Some programs are open to almost anyone; others are restricted to very specific categories of recipients. The majority of awards fall somewhere in between.

Your first step in seeking financial aid should be to establish your basic qualifications as a potential recipient. To help you do this, ask yourself these general questions to help define your educational and financial needs and goals:

- **What kinds of colleges or universities interest me?**
- **What careers or fields of study interest me?**

- **Do I plan to earn a degree?**
- **Am I willing to consider a loan or part-time work?**
- **In what parts of the country am I willing to live and study?**

✎ Compile a List of Potential Qualifying Factors

Once you have defined your goals, the next step is to identify any special factors that would qualify you for aid programs that are offered only to a restricted group. Examine this area carefully, and remember that even slight or unlikely connections may be worth checking out.

The most common qualifications involve:

- gender
- race or ethnic heritage
- place of residence
- citizenship
- employer
- membership in an organization (such as a union, association, or a fraternal group)
- religious affiliation
- military or veteran status
- financial need
- athletic ability
- merit or academic achievement
- creative or professional accomplishment
- community involvement or volunteer work

Some of these qualifiers may also apply to your parents, step-parents, guardians and/or spouse. If your parents are divorced, you should be aware of both parents' affiliations — even if you don't live with one (or both) of them. If your parents are deceased, you may be eligible for some awards based on their status or affiliations. And given enough lead time, it may be possible for you (or your parents) to join a particular organization, or establish residence, in time for you to be eligible for certain funds. You should contact any organization with which you or your parent may be affiliated for financial aid information, since some associations, unions, and employers do not make this information available to the public.

✎ Contact the Financial Aid Office of the Schools and Other Educational Institutions That You Are Considering

Most colleges and universities, and other educational institutions offer their own institution-specific financial aid programs. Their financial aid offices may also have information on privately sponsored awards that are specifically designated for students at those institutions. Contact the financial aid offices at all institutions in which you have an interest and request applications and detailed information on all aid programs that they sponsor.

✎ Use Every Available Resource

Thoroughly search the various directories and guides available through high school counseling offices and career resource centers, college financial aid offices, and libraries. These references provide a wealth of information on all types of financial aid and are generally the best source for privately-funded programs.

Some directories contain information on federal and state-administered aid. In addition, you may contact the U.S. Department of Education at 400 Maryland Ave., S.W.

Washington, DC 20202, for up-to-date information on U.S. government award programs. Similarly, you should contact your state department of education for details on what is offered in your particular state. Your high school counselor, public or school librarian should be able to provide you with contact information for various government organizations.

Keep in mind that a large number of financial aid programs are sponsored by small or local organizations. High school counselors are often aware of local programs, and can usually tell you how to get in touch with the sponsoring or administrating organizations. Local newspapers are also a rich source of information on financial aid programs.

✎ Allow Enough Time for the Application Process

The amount of time needed to complete the application process for individual awards can vary, so pay close attention to application details and deadlines. Some awards have deadlines that require you to apply more than a year before study will actually begin. In general, allow plenty of time to write for official applications (you won't be considered for some awards unless you apply using the correct forms.)

Carefully read and follow all instructions when you fill out the application forms. If you fail to answer certain questions, you may be disqualified even though you are a worthy candidate. Be sure to accurately and completely file all required supporting material, such as essays and resumés. Additionally, you will need to give your references enough time to submit their recommendations. Teachers, in particular, get many requests for letters of recommendation and should be given as much advance notice as possible.

✎ Don't Apply Unless You Are Sure You Qualify

Finally, don't submerge yourself under needless paperwork. If you find you don't qualify for a particular award, don't apply for it. Instead, use your time and energy to unearth and apply for more likely sources of aid.

A Word of Encouragement

By doing your homework, you'll greatly increase your chances of finding funding for your education. The personal labor involved in securing financial support for school is much like the resumé shuffling and door knocking that occurs during a job hunt. Success is likely to come to those who make themselves aware of the opportunities available, and who pursue those opportunities in a dedicated, continuous, and organized manner. And last, but not least, don't get discouraged. Frustration is part of the game and should not bring your financial aid search to a halt.

Debra M. Kirby is editor of Scholarships, Fellowships and Loans, and Fund Your Way Through College published by Gale Research, Inc.

Tough Questions to Ask Any Admissions Officer

By Robert G. McLendon

As a college admissions officer for more years than I care to admit, it is clear to me: today's prospective students are carefully comparing colleges and striving to learn all they can about the colleges to which they apply. The age group of 18 to 24 year olds has declined in the United States, and this is creating a type of "buyer's market" in the market place of higher education.

To assure yourself that your expectations of a college are met, you, the student consumer, need not hesitate to ask admissions officers some "tough questions." Here are a few suggestions of tough questions that could help you make the right choice when selecting a college.

Academic Questions

1. How many students in last year's freshman class returned for their sophomore year?

2. What percent of the freshman class obtained a 2.00 (C) average or above last year?

3. If accepted, will you tell me my predicted freshman grade point average? Many colleges use a mathematical formula based on studies of currently enrolled students to predict an applicant's freshman grade point average.

4. What is the college's procedure for class placement? This is especially important in the areas of English and mathematics because freshmen often vary significantly in their ability to handle these important academic skills.

5. What procedure is used to assign a faculty advisor? This is especially important if the student is undecided as to their major area of study.

6. What type of additional academic services does your college offer at no additional cost to the student (e.g., tutoring, career or personal counseling, study-skill workshops, improving reading speed, etc.)?

7. How effective is your college's honor code? What is the penalty for cheating?

8. How accessible is your computer lab to freshmen? Do students need to bring their own computers?

Social Questions

1. What is the average age of your student body and what percent resides on campus? Many colleges today have a large and increasing population of commuting part-time adult students and a dwindling enrollment of 17 to 18 year old full-time, degree-seeking students residing on campus.

2. Is your college a "suitcase college" on the weekends? If not, what are some typical weekend activities for students on your campus?

3. What procedure is used to select roommates if no preference is listed?

4. What are some of the causes of students being suspended or dismissed from your college? Is there a system of appeal for those who have been dismissed?

5. How can a prospective student arrange a campus visit? Can a prospecive student stay overnight on campus? Clearly the best possible way to evaluate a college socially is to plan a visit to the campus. When you visit, try not to be shy. After your talk and tour with the admissions officer, walk around by yourself and informally ask students their opinions. A good place to chat with students is in the college's student center or at the dining hall.

6. What are some of the rules and regulations that govern residence hall life? Are there coeducational residence halls?

7. What is the college's policy concerning alchohol on campus?

8. Ask for statistics on the crime rate on campus. Colleges are required to have this information available to the public. Also ask about the crime rate in the community surrounding the college.

Financial Questions

1. What percent of your students received financial aid based on financial need?

2. What percent of your students received scholarships based on academic ability?

3. What percent of a typical financial aid offer is in the form of a loan?

4. How much did your college increase cost (room, board, tuition, and fees) from last year to current year?

5. If an accepted student must submit a room deposit, when is the deposit due, and when is it refundable? The deposit should be refundable in full up to May 1, if the college or university is a member of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors.

6. If my family demonstrates a financial need on the federal financial aid forms, what percent of the established need will typically be awarded? When can I expect to receive an official financial aid award letter?

Knowing what questions to ask an admissions officer is an important part of the decision-making process. Most admissions officers want you to ask "tough questions" because if you make the wrong choice we, too, have failed in our job.

Robert G. McLendon is Vice President and Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid at Brevard College, Brevard, North Carolina.

- Be prompt.
- Don't pretend to be someone you're not.
- Try to schedule the interview after you have toured the campus so you will know more about the college.
- You cannot overdress, but you can underdress for an interview, so dress up, not down.
- Speak clearly and use good non-verbal communications, such as good posture, facial expression and eye contact.
- Answer questions to the best of your knowledge and ability; don't be afraid to admit you don't know something.
- After the interview, ask about your chance for being admitted (or in receiving a scholarship).
- Get a business card of the interviewer.
- Send a courtesy thank you note after the interview simply stating you enjoyed the conversation. This is polite and a good way to be remembered.

Remember, this is a chance to showcase your accomplishments and help the interviewer see you as a thinking, feeling individual instead of just another statistic like an SAT score. It's your chance to show your maturity; to display your sensitivity and to convey your outlook on what a college education should do for you. The interview is not an obstacle—it is an opportunity.

—Robert G. McLendon

Selecting a College: One Size Does Not Fit All

Colleges and universities come in different sizes and types with different emphasis and opportunities. Your needs and priorities will determine how you select from such a wide range of choices (public/private, large/small, 4 year/2 year, urban/rural, secular/religious ...) and find an institution that is appropriate for you.

Choose a LARGE UNIVERSITY (enrollment greater than 10,000) if you want:

- a large number of academic majors. At a large university available academic majors often number in the hundreds, not dozens. If you change your major or career choice, a large university is more able to accommodate that change

- more sophisticated laboratory equipment and libraries of considerable size available for undergraduate use
- a multiplicity of services designed to help students identify and pursue career options
- more student activities and more varied opportunities to associate with other students
- a variety of opportunities for student involvement — organizations which cater to a wide range of interests, religious denominations, political involvement, etc.
- student services staffs — personal counseling and other opportunities to improve social awareness and skills as well as improved opportunities for career identification and job seeking
- to meet students whose backgrounds present a wide variety of experiences, values and perspectives. A large university is an excellent place to gain experience in being able to live and work with a wide variety of persons

Choose a MID-SIZE STATE UNIVERSITY if you want:

- a less expensive institution compared to a private institution
- the option of living at home while pursuing your degree
- to take advantage of state scholarship programs
- to use a system that is supported by your tax dollars
- proximity to parents, friends and your home community
- an integrated educational program with easy transfer from campuses as well as two-year institutions
- cooperative extension, continuing education or satellite program because you cannot

attend classes full-time on campus
- opportunities to establish long-lasting relationships as a source of friendship and professional contacts for a lifetime in your home state

Choose a TWO-YEAR COLLEGE (designed to prepare you for continuation at a four-year institution) if you want:

- a good start at the essential foundations of undergraduate training
- access to the faculty: typically faculty members choose to teach at two-year institutions because they are dedicated to teaching. You often get to know professors on a one-to-one basis in the classroom and socially at extracurricular events.
- less expense (especially if you plan on commuting)
- more opportunities for leadership and participation in the first two years of your college career

Ensure a Successful Campus Visit

Making the Appointment

- Make your appointment to visit a campus by telephone, not mail. (You can find out immediately if you need to pick an alternate date.)
- Try to schedule your visit when college classes are in session.
- Plan for a minimum half a day visit.
- Ask for travel directions and parking assignments.
- Request that a campus map, catalog, and student newspaper be mailed to you.
- Ask for an appointment to speak with someone in your special interest (athletics, fine arts) areas during your campus visit.
- Make an appointment to talk with the financial aid administrator. Ask if it is helpful to the financial aid staff if you bring a copy of you and your parents' last tax return.
- If an interview is required for admissions, request time for the interview.
- You can also request to visit with a professor, attend a class, and stay overnight in a college dorm.

Prepare Yourself

- List questions to ask and places you want to see.
- Talk with your guidance counselor for more suggestions on how to prepare.
- Ask for the names of students from your high school enrolled at the college(s) you plan to visit.
- Read the catalog and other college materials before you visit.

The Visit

- If your tour guide is a student, ask "what attracted you to this college?"
- Take notes during your campus visit and tour.
- Write down the name and address of your tour guide and other people you meet.
- Make sure the housing you see is typical freshman housing.
- Check out information on the campus bulletin boards.
- Ask for campus crime statistics and about the type of security system on campus.
- Have a meal on campus.

Don't be bashful, ask a lot of questions, college is expensive and you are the customer. Relax and have a good time.

–Robert G. McLendon

- an entire institution's budget spent on the first two undergraduate years
- emphasis on the basics — reading, writing and math
- to transfer to a four-year institution better prepared and with a greater possibility of being accepted than if you were right out of high school

Choose an INDEPENDENT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY if you want:

- a school with an extraordinary reputation in academic circles boasting an outstanding faculty
- to learn as much from your gifted fellow students as from your professors
- informal associations between yourself and your professors
- seminar classes with leaders in public affairs, the arts and sciences
- a diverse student body (deliberately created by the admissions office)
- a smaller size school which provides a critical mass for a wide variety of activities and sense of community

Choose a CHURCH-RELATED COLLEGE or UNIVERSITY if you want:

- a values-based education. A church-related institution offers the opportunity to explore the values inherent in the ideas and behaviors presented in the curriculum
- spiritual growth opportunities. A church-related institution operates on the notion of educating the whole person spiritually and intellectually.
- a broader view of the role of ethics in society. You will be encouraged to develop and maintain a personal perspective as a moral being in the workplace and at home.

Choose a COLLEGE FOR WOMEN if you want:

- to develop your leadership skills. Women hold all the leadership positions in a women's college. This leadership extends into the working world — 40% of female members of Congress and a third of the women board members of Fortune 1000 companies are graduates of women's colleges.

- to attend graduate or professional school after graduation. Graduates of women's colleges are more than twice as likely as graduates of coeducational colleges to receive doctorate degrees. Furthermore, women's colleges produce a higher percentage of graduates who go on to medical school and study in the sciences.
- to study science, math or economics. Women's eglleges produce a disproportionate share of women who enroll in fields such as science, math and economics.
- to pursue a career which is nontraditional for women. About 50% of the working women who graduate from women's colleges are in nontraditional jobs, for example, law, medicine, business management and computer science.

Choose an HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE if you want:

- excellent scholarship opportunities
- typically small class sizes allowing interaction and personal attention from the faculty
- a "family atmosphere" where strong friendships are easily formed with a wide range of extra-curricular acitivities
- an excellent alumni network, strong job placement and career counseling

Prepared from articles by: James C. Blackburn, Director of Admissions and Records, California State University at Fullerton; Stanley Z. Koplik, Executive Director, Kansas Board of Regents; Dr. Jacob C. Martinson, Jr., President, High Point University; F. Gregory Campbell, President, Carthage College; Neil K. Clark, Director of College Counseling and Guidance, The Walker School; Dr. Anita M. Pampusch, President, College of St. Catherine; Robert G. McLendon, Vice President and Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid, Brevard College, Brevard, North Carolina.

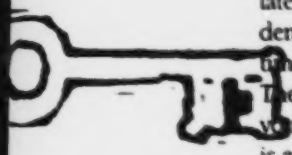
Getting the Most Out of a College Fair Program

- **Be well prepared.** Read catalogs and college materials and have specific questions ready.
- **General questions you want answered include:** location, typical class size, religious affiliations, admissions requirements, fees and timetables, your major offered, expenses to budget beyond room, board, tuition, and fees, financial aid deadlines and percent receiving financial aid, housing availability and requirements, recreational facilities, activities of interest to you, and when and how to arrange a campus visit.
- **Be organized.** Most college fairs arrange colleges in alphabetical order. Have an alphabetical list of colleges you want to see.
- **Take a notebook** so you can write down notes and names of college representatives you meet.
- **Meet with your guidance counselor** prior to the college fair for suggestions of colleges that fit your interest and abilities.
- **Bring a copy of your high school transcript** to the college fair; this will help admissions officers give you a better answer concerning your chances for admission.
- **Leave time to "shop around"** and discover colleges that might not be on your advanced list.

–Robert G. McLendon

Campus Lifestyle: an Important Consideration in Choosing a College

By Dr. Neill Sanders



What do meal plans, student organizations, fraternities and sororities, and residence halls have to do with choosing a college? A great deal. From late August through May the campus is a student's home and typically three-quarters of your time will be spent outside of the classroom. Therefore, campus lifestyle, the sum of what you can expect to experience when not in class, is a very important component of college life worthy of careful attention.

A few tips when trying to determine a campus lifestyle: **Don't believe everything you hear about a college!** For instance, some may have a party school reputation while others might be known for a student body that cares about nothing but studying. The truth about all campuses lies somewhere in between.

Draw up a list of lifestyle characteristics you think are the most important. What do you want in a dormitory environment? Does the university have the student organizations that interest you? What about security?

Ask questions! Colleges make a sincere effort to inform prospective students about campus lifestyle, but neither brochures nor campus videos can address all the topics that are important to you. Ask your friends or recent alumni who attend a certain college about their impressions; call or write the admissions office of a particular institution to get answers to key questions; and carefully review the literature and videos sent to you. Whenever possible, visit the colleges that are highest on your list because there is no better way to learn about an institution than actually being there.

There are several lifestyle features that you should investigate.

Residence Halls: If you elect to live in a residence hall, you will spend more time there (studying, talking with friends, sleeping) than any other place on campus, so it is important to know the facts about university housing policies. • Does the college require all freshmen to live on campus? • Can you move off campus after the freshman year? • Are the resident halls co-ed and, if so, are men and women distributed throughout the halls? (Some colleges have men and women on the same floors while others reserve certain floors or wings for each sex.) • If you are to share a room, how is your roommate chosen?

Regulations: Most colleges have strict regulations regarding alcohol, regardless of the student's age. Many also have "quiet time" policies when stereos, televisions, and radios must be turned down or off. Universities do vary greatly on such issues as allowing freshmen to bring their car to campus, how much furniture (a

any) the college provides for your dormitory room, and if you can bring your pet to campus.

Greek Life: At many campuses fraternities and sororities play a big role in campus life. "Greek" life has many rewards for those who join. It provides members with social and cultural opportunities beyond what the campus typically offers. But keep in mind that not all Greek houses are residential. In some cases only the officers or upperclassmen can live in the house. If "going Greek" fits your lifestyle, you'll need to learn about "rush" and "pledging." Because not all who want to join are permitted to do so, how do you think you would fit into a campus if you could not (or elected not to) join a fraternity or sorority? Keep in mind too that Greek membership will add to your overall college costs.

Food: Does the college have a meal plan where you purchase in advance so many meals per week each semester and pay for them whether or not you eat in the dining halls? A few colleges let you pay for each meal. Others issue collegiate credit cards that can be used for meals and other services (such as at sports events or at the bookstore). What about special dietary needs, such as kosher or vegetarian meals? When visiting a college, plan to have a meal on campus.

Security: College campuses are safe, but don't take security for granted. While the door to your dorm room can be locked anytime you want, what about the resident hall's outside doors? Think of a residence hall as a large hotel: is there a worker (often a student working part-time) located in the lobby to monitor when guests come in and when they leave? What are the school's policies regarding guests in the room, especially overnight guests? Most college campuses are large, encompassing hundreds of acres. They can be pretty lonely places if you are walking alone from the library to your dormitory at night. Women should check and see if the college has student volunteers who will escort you to your campus destination during certain evening hours.

Extracurricular: For many students a very important part of college life is participation in campus clubs and organizations as well as attending the social, cultural, and athletic events sponsored by the school. Virtually every

college has a student government organization, a campus newspaper and yearbook. Campus-based radio and television stations are not uncommon.

Student centered clubs and intramural sports activities are great ways to meet new friends and develop new skills. But do the universities high on your selection list have the activities that interest you the most? Can anyone try out for a varsity team? Can you be part of campus musical or drama productions without being a fine arts major? Does the student recreation center have facilities where you can jog, exercise, swim, or shoot a few baskets on a schedule convenient to you?

Attending a concert offered by the college's music faculty, going to a lecture given by a well known guest lecturer, or cheering on the football team at homecoming are all part of the college experience. But make sure to find out in advance if tickets to such events routinely are made available to students and if the tickets are part of the "student fees" most colleges charge all students. If not, you will need to plan ahead and budget for those events of greatest interest to you.

As a college student, you may want to participate in organizations designed to celebrate your religious or ethnic heritage. Do the colleges of your choice have such clubs? What activities do they provide? Unlike your high school environment, you might find fewer students at a college who share your religious beliefs or cultural heritage. Do students currently enrolled at the college with backgrounds similar to yours feel accepted in the college's environment?

Service Activities: Campus lifestyle should not be restricted simply to the events which take place at the college. Perhaps as a high school student you tutor middle school children with math deficiencies, work with the homeless, or are involved with ecology issues in your community. Such volunteer activities do not have to end once you enroll in college. Will your college encourage such activities; do they have an office that can assist you in locating ways to express your willingness to help others? Does the local community in which your final college choice is located offer the amenities of interest to you?

The choice of the college that best meets your needs is seldom easy, often time consuming, frequently requires family participation, and always should be exciting. As you explore your options, remember that a campus lifestyle is an important feature that makes for a rewarding college experience!

Dr. Neill Sanders is Enrollment Manager at University of Rochester in Rochester, New York.

Major Decisions: Choosing the Right College Major

By Dr. Donald Quirk

Under the best of circumstances, choosing a college major is not easy, and a number of conditions often complicate the task. First of all, most freshmen are surprised to learn that college is significantly different from their previous school experience and that the nature of most major fields differ considerably from courses offered in high school. So, to major in history because you are good at memorizing dates, names and battles or to choose accountancy because you enjoyed a high school bookkeeping or "accounting" course is likely to lead to dissatisfaction. Secondly, well-intentioned but naive "advisors," often as not, ignore your interests, skills or ambitions. Blindly following Dad's suggestion to "study law so you can get rich like Uncle Zeke" nearly guarantees a mismatch. Finally, many young people find themselves in the midst of personal change and discovery. Making a commitment that may affect the rest of your life at a time when your dreams change more often than the blue-light special at Kmart can leave the hardiest person paralyzed by fear.

Adding to the pressure felt by many students are the expectations of those around them that everyone beginning college should have already decided what he or she intends to study. Even colleges — often unintentionally — add to the pressure; applications usually require a student to select from a list of intended majors. Typically, a college will list 30 to 100 major choices; in the list — usually appearing last — comes the choice, "undecided." It comes as little surprise that many students feel that they are somehow defective if they have not yet made up their minds.

Now, there are some students who "always wanted to study medicine" and a good number of others who have given a great deal of time to their selection of a major, but the hard truth of the matter is that many students — including those who have declared a major — really don't know what they want to study. This is evidenced by a national statistic showing that nearly four out of five college students eventually change their major at least once. So what's a person to do?

Don't Worry

If you're beginning college and you're unsure about what you want to study, you probably don't have to make a choice quite yet. While a few technical and scientific fields have highly structured curricula that require beginning courses be taken immediately, most students can delay major decisions for one or even two years without disastrous consequences. For colleges — unlike vocational schools — require students to study subjects that provide a breadth of knowledge outside the major. Usually described as general education courses, these courses include selections in the arts, the natural and social sciences and the humanities. Typically, they represent a third to a half of the total course requirement for graduation and they provide an opportunity to experiment, to get a taste of a range of fields.

"Know Thyself"

Get to know more about what fits you. Remember, you are not choosing a major for Uncle Zeke; you're choosing one for yourself, so the place to begin is with yourself, your personality, your interests, your abilities, your values and your goals. Choosing a major — like any significant personal decision — requires you to think through some important questions about yourself. What has my previous experience prepared me to do? How can I connect the knowledge and skills that I've already developed with a course of study? What areas that I've studied in the past were interesting to me? What college majors capitalize on that interest? How do my personal and career goals connect with my selection of a major?

Avoid Career Planning "Tunnel Vision"

Be broad-minded when thinking about a major that matches your career plan. Many students recognize that choosing a major is closely linked to choosing a career but are confused into believing that only management majors can hope to become business executives or only "pre-law" students can hope to become lawyers. The fact of the matter is that there are many majors that lead to these or a number of other career goals. Increasingly, firms have shown that they value the analytical thinking, communication and research skills developed by students in the liberal arts by hiring graduates from philosophy, English, sociology and a variety of other non-vocational majors.

Find Help

There are a large number of tools — books, interest inventories, aptitude tests, values and goal assessments — that can help you find a major that fits. A number of self-help books, like Richard Bolles' *What Color is Your Parachute*, provide a guided tour through the process of choosing a field of study and a career. Interest inventories, like the Kuder or the Strong-Campbell, help you match your interests with those of people in a variety of professions. Computerized self-assessments like Discover, developed by ACT, or SIGI, from the College Board, lead you through a systematic process of self-exploration that leads to some potential matches. High school counselors or college advising or career planning offices can help you put these and a number of other resources to work for you.

In addition, a growing number of colleges have programs and services to help students develop an academic plan. Some of these include academic advising programs, special courses for undecided students, and career planning workshops and counseling services to name a few. In recent years, more and more colleges have also developed freshman seminars. Designed to help new students make the transition to college life, these seminars often include the related topics of choosing a major field and choosing a career.

But probably the most effective resources are people. Find someone you can trust — a good high school guidance counselor, a sympathetic college advisor, an accessible faculty member, or a knowledgeable career planning counselor in your college. They can help you begin the process. With a little help and some persistence, you'll find that major decisions do not have to be major problems.

Donald Quirk, Ph.D., is Director of Assessment at Northeastern Illinois University.

How to Survive Freshman Year

1. Go to class. Students who attend class rarely fail.

2. Work hard. Work harder than you did in high school. Spend two to three hours out of class studying for every hour of the week you spend in class. For a fifteen hour class schedule, spend 30 hours a week studying and 15 in class.

3. Play hard. College is not meant to be all work. Relax and have some kind of balance in your life.

4. Participation. Participate in all the orientation activities that your college offers. Students who participate in these elective courses have a higher probability of becoming sophomores.

5. Live on campus. Students who live on campus have a higher survival rate, especially during your first two years of college.

6. Choose your friends wisely. You are likely to become just like them. Winners select winners. Losers select losers.

7. Get help early. Don't wait until late in the semester. There is no stigma to seeking assistance. Remember, you're paying the salaries of the college employees and you have a right to ask them for help.

8. Develop a relationship with your academic advisor. If you don't have one initially who seems to show an interest in you and whom you feel you can relate to comfortably, ask for another one.

9. Find a significant adult during the semester. College students who find at least one special adult during the freshman year are much more likely to survive.

10. Identify outstanding upper class students after whose behaviors you can pattern your own behaviors.

11. Join a group sponsored by the college. Students who join groups have much higher survival rates.

12. Get involved. Attend plays, concerts, lectures, sports activities, etc. The more time you invest in activities on campus other than simply going to class, the more likely you are to survive the freshman year.

13. Get career planning early. Visit your campus career planning center; take a battery of vocational aptitude tests; sign up for computer assisted interactive guidance and career planning; and most importantly, see a career planning specialist to discuss your individual needs and characteristics.

14. Use helping services and resources offered. There is no stigma to accepting assistance. For example, use a personal counseling center. Many colleges offer academic support services, especially in the areas of math and writing skills.

15. Learn college study skills. Most high school students have not learned the kind of study skills they need to do well in college. Use study skills centers; ask your professors what study skills are particularly useful and appropriate.

Prepared from the research and experience of John Gardner, Associate Vice Provost for Regional Campuses and Continuing Education, University of South Carolina.

Learning a New Role...For Parents

By Ann and Paul Krouse

Most literature directed to parents of college-bound students focuses on financial matters, an area of great interest and concern to most of us. Yet there are other roles besides bankrolls which require attention and involvement. Some are obvious and others more subtle. Having completed the college admissions process four times with our own children, my wife and I would like to share our experiences and views.

Be involved.

Selecting a college is just one more experience in the parenting process with the usual mixture of risks, rewards, joys, and uncertainties. You will find yourself poring over directories, college catalogs, counselor recommendations, applications, and financial aid forms. The more you do together, the less tedious the tasks and the more enlightening the process becomes. We found ourselves engaged in a very productive cycle which started with counselor/student meetings. From this counselor-to-parent shuttle which was repeated several times over a period of a few weeks, our daughter developed a list of six or seven college choices. We visited several of her college choices on a 4-day car trip and ultimately she selected a college which happily accepted her. Waiting for the acceptance letter was agonizing, receiving it was joyous. The family celebration which followed was memorable.

Our experiences were undoubtedly quite common. The subtleties merit equal awareness.

Listen to your child.

Most of us have our own preferences of where we would like our children to go to school, but we've had our chance(s) and now it's their turn. Certainly your guidance, opinions, and views are important. You may have some inflexible requirements which your child must be responsive to such as financial limitations. Nevertheless, it is imperative that you listen to your child's preferences and to the best of your ability and with your best judgement encourage your child to fulfill his or her dreams, not yours.

Be patient and "tune-in."

The separation between child and family is beginning and it impacts on everyone involved in different ways and at different times. So much of the college admissions process requires that the children initiate action which will cause separation that there is frequently a reluctance to complete a task which can easily be misinterpreted as laziness or irresponsibility. An application may remain untouched, an essay delayed, a conference postponed. You must "tune-in" to your child's emotions and try to determine when he or she is being lax and when normal anxieties are rising to the surface, slowing down progress. Try to be patient, guide instead of push, and acknowledge your mutual feelings instead of hiding them. The closer the family is, the more pronounced these experiences may be.

Respect your child's privacy.

Social gatherings will undoubtedly bring you into contact with other parents of college-bound students and the plans and experiences of your children will become timely topics of conversation. Sharing experiences with other parents can be mutually beneficial. But, revealing your child's exact SAT scores, GPA, class rank and similar information is an invasion of privacy. If your child wants to announce this information to friends, relatives or other parents, that's his or her business and choice — not yours. Certainly you wouldn't want your child publicizing your income or other personal information to outsiders. Similarly, your child probably would prefer that some aspect of this process remain within the family. You will be amazed at what remarkably bad taste some parents exhibit in discussing their children's experiences.

Shop carefully.

As adults, you are undoubtedly a more experienced and sophisticated shopper than your child and your experience can be significant as your child shops for a college. Most colleges are very ethical and professional in their recruitment practices, but remember they are "selling." At college fairs, admissions officers can be persuasive, which is not to their discredit. College catalogs can be slick and attractive, which is also understandable and acceptable. But remember, most colleges are selling a package that can cost $5,000 to $15,000 per year or $20,000 to $60,000 over four years. They need from 100 to 1,000 new students each year to keep their doors open. That's not an indictment of their motives, but simply a representation of their realities. Read between the lines and beyond the pretty pictures. Don't hesitate to confer with your child's counselors about the choices and options available — counselors are generally objective and committed to service the student, not a particular institution.

When you visit campuses, allow enough time to wander on your own after your formal tour, usually conducted by the admissions office. Walk into the library, dormitories, student union and even classrooms, if possible. Talk to students around the campus and observe as much as you can. Virtually all college admissions officials will encourage such "investigations" on your part since they don't want your child to make a mistake and stay for one year or less any more than you do.

Naturally, each family's experiences will be a little different. The process is not very scientific, in spite of computerbanks, search services, video presentations, etc. Like looking for a house, there is more emotion in the process than some are ready to acknowledge. Nevertheless, as we look back, it was another enjoyable family experience where the rewards far outweigh the risks.

Ann and Paul Krouse are the publishers of Who's Who Among American High School Students and the parents of four children: Amy, entered the freshman class at Tufts University class of 1987. Beth followed at the University of Illinois, class of 1989; Joe at the University of Michigan, class of 1993; and Katie at Indiana University, class of 1994. WHEW!

Notes

College Scholarships

High school students are invited to apply for one of 150 scholarships of $1,000 each which may be used at the college or university of their choice. Award winners are determined on the basis of academic performance, extracurricular activities and financial need. More than $1,767,000 has been awarded to date.

To receive your application, send a note stating your name, address, city, state, zip code, year of high school graduation, and approximate grade point average to:

Educational Communications
Scholarship Foundation
721 N. McKinley Road
P.O. Box 5012
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